

# Office of School Food Services and Nutrition

The Office of School Food Services and Nutrition administers the National School Lunch, Afterschool Snack and School Breakfast Programs, the Food Distribution Program, and the Nutrition Education and Training Program in the South Carolina public schools, residential child care institutions, and private and parochial schools with lunch and breakfast programs. This involves the reimbursement of Federal program funds to participating School Food Authorities (SFA) for meals served in schools, providing special marketing projects and procurement assistance to promote more nutritious eating habits, conducting on-site compliance monitoring, coordinating and providing training, nutrition projects and grants and administering the Food Distribution Program.

The mission of the Office of School Food Services and Nutrition is to guarantee high quality food and nutrition programs in every South Carolina school district through educational support, resources, and advocacy. Child Nutrition Programs in South Carolina support the health and education of students. Our strategic plan and programs focus on two objectives:

- (1) that all students will eat quality school meals daily and
- (2) that all students will receive nutrition education that will teach them to make healthy choices for a lifetime. To achieve these objectives, four program areas are addressed:

- nutrition education,
- advocacy and support for school meals,
- training of food service employees, and
- marketing the program to all customers.

The office consists of 18 full time staff members organized in quality education teams to address

strategic plan components for school food service in South Carolina and to provide regulatory oversight to the United States Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs and the disbursement of Federal funds to the SFAs.

The program coordination responsibilities and key operating teams/lead persons are:

National School Lunch and Breakfast:  
Marcella J. Clark

Food Distribution:  
Craig W. Brooks

Research and Training:  
Edna Page Anderson, PhD

Marketing:  
Charles E. Bushee

Nutrition:  
Janice M. Oates, RD

Procurement:  
Keith W. Ringer

Technology:  
Leon S. Williams, MBA

Financial:  
Andrew W. Thomas

Monitoring:  
Betty Campbell, MS, RD  
Walter F. Caudle, APM

Residential Child Care Institutions/Private and Parochial Schools:  
Marcella J. Clark  
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# Why We Have Child Nutrition Programs

We have child nutrition programs in South Carolina schools because these programs focus on the health and education of children.

We have child nutrition programs in South Carolina schools because nutrition plays a major role in five of the ten leading causes of death of Americans: coronary heart disease, stroke, atherosclerosis, diabetes, and some types of cancer.

We have child nutrition programs in South Carolina schools because our children need them to improve their chances of success. According to South Carolina Kids Count data for 2002:

Over 23% of South Carolina's children and youth live in poverty and 10% live in extreme poverty, thus reducing their opportunities for healthy growth and development.

17% of South Carolina's children are not covered by public or private health insurance (including Medicaid).

15% of South Carolina first graders are assessed as not ready for the first grade and 13.6% repeat one of the first three grades.

33% of children in South Carolina do not graduate from high school.

We have child nutrition programs in South Carolina schools because these programs help children develop lifetime healthy eating habits. Adult health status is influenced by childhood health habits. Some of the risk factors for major chronic diseases have origins in childhood. It is hard to change habits as adults. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

In school nutrition programs, parents, teachers, administrators, and food service professionals cooperate to help children develop healthy eating habits

We have child nutrition programs in South Carolina schools because what we eat affects how we learn. There is a strong link between nutrition and cognitive development.

Undernutrition can permanently retard mental and physical development.

The longer a child's nutritional needs are not met, the greater the chance that child has of permanent cognitive impairment.

Hungry children perform lower on standardized tests.

Hunger and undernutrition are related to tiredness and low academic performance.

***"Historically,  
South  
Carolina has  
been a leader  
in the School  
Lunch  
Program"***

## Mission

The mission of the Office of School Food Services and Nutrition, the largest food service program in the Palmetto State, is to guarantee high quality food and nutrition programs in every South Carolina school district through educational support, resources, and advocacy.

## Objectives

All students will eat quality school meals daily.

All students will receive nutrition education that will teach them to make healthy choices for a lifetime.

## **Program Components**

### **National School Lunch Program**

All public schools in South Carolina participate in the National School Lunch program. More than 78.4 million lunches were served in 2001–2002. Sixty percent of these lunches were free or reduced in price.

On a typical day, 435,955 students were served lunch in South Carolina public schools. Federal funding for lunches totaled over \$105 million.

Historically, South Carolina has been a leader in the School Lunch Program. A statewide school lunch program was developed in 1933 and the South Carolina state legislature passed a school lunch act in 1943, three years before the National School Lunch Act was passed.

### **Afterschool Snacks in the National School Lunch Program**

The National School Lunch Program offers cash reimbursement to help schools serve snacks to children after their regular school day ends. After school snacks give children a nutritional boost and draw them into supervised activities that are safe, fun, and filled with learning opportunities. During the 2001–2002 school year, 498 schools in South Carolina served over two million snacks. Reimbursement for snacks exceeded \$1 million.

### **School Breakfast Program**

All public schools in South Carolina participate in the federally funded School Breakfast Program. Participation is required because of a joint resolution passed by the South Carolina General Assembly in March of 1992 requiring schools to implement the Breakfast Program by the 1993–94 school year. A total of 28.9 million breakfasts were served in 2001–2002. Eighty-five percent of these breakfasts were served free or at a reduced price.

The average number of students participating each day in the program was 159,766. Federal funding for breakfasts was approximately \$30.2 million.

### **Residential Child Care Institutions, Private and Parochial Schools, and Special Milk Program**

The Office of School Food Services and Nutrition has responsibility for the administration of approximately 60 additional school food authorities in residential childcare institutions and private and parochial schools with lunch and breakfast programs. Reimbursement is also provided under the Special Milk Program.

### **Food Distribution Program**

In 2001–2002, South Carolina received 80 commodity food items and 71 processed end products valued at \$14.3 million from the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) donated food program. Recipient agencies included all public schools, private schools, and residential childcare centers. The delivery of commodities was accomplished by contracts with two regional commercial distributors. The Department of Defense also teamed up with the USDA to deliver fresh fruits and vegetables to 15 SFAs in South Carolina during the 2002–2003 school year for a total of \$1,173,096.